

## V. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CORRIDOR PLANNING PROCESS

Triggered by the State Stewardship Program, representatives from the NPS, WDNR, IAPTF, Waupaca County Parks, Portage County Parks, Regional Planning Commission and the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, better known as the Core Team, met on April 30, 1993 to initiate the Corridor Planning Process in Waupaca and Portage Counties. The purpose of this process is to determine the "ideal" location for the trail, release State Stewardship monies, and comply with State and Federal environmental laws. Waupaca and Portage Counties are among the first counties to go through this process because of their significant glacial features and two strong trail chapters who have accomplished an extensive amount of work prior to the formal planning process.

The Core Team's primary task was to identify a corridor and secondarily to select a preferred trail alignment within the corridor. The **Comprehensive Management Plan for the Ice Age National Scenic Trail** provides general guidance as where to locate the trail. It states that the trail shall follow the terminal moraine or glacial features left by the last glacial advance. However the terminal and recessional moraines, and other features left by the Wisconsin Ice Age can be miles in width. Therefore, to find the best location for the trail and shrink the possibilities, planners identify three elements: the corridor, railway, and trail. (Also see Definitions of Terms: Corridor of Opportunity, Railway and Trail.)

The corridor is the largest of these elements. It is defined by locating clusters of outstanding, interpretable glacial and biologic features, public lands, as well as areas of continuous scenic beauty. After these features are mapped, their patterns typically reveal a very general, natural alignment for the trail. The width of the corridor is usually on a landscape scale of 1-3 miles, although in the case of large significant features it can be wider. The corridor includes desirable features for the user to walk or gaze upon, or to be preserved. Pragmatically, another reason the corridor is so wide is to allow flexibility in working with landowners since participation in the project is voluntary.

This corridor is also the area within which WDNR may provide Stewardship grants for the acquisition of lands for the trail, accept lands for permanent dedication for Ice Age NST purposes, and acquire lands for Ice Age NST purposes. It also defines the area within which federal involvement in land protection and acquisition for the Ice Age NST may occur, if Congress should provide such authority in the future. Lastly, it provides focus and direction to the IAPTF's land protection program and partnerships, and access to state Stewardship funds. The discussion of the corridor alternatives is found in Section VI: Locational Description of the Proposed Corridor and Alternatives.

Two other elements, the railway and trail, fit within the corridor. The railway is the width or area of land that is managed for the purpose of the Ice Age NST. It includes the "Trail" and surrounding lands that are owned, leased, or in some way controlled for management as part of the Ice Age NST. These management purposes may include but are not limited to: the creation of buffer for the trail to separate it from adjoining land ownerships and uses;

and/or protection of scenic or significant geologic features or plant communities.

The trail is the actual usable tread and surrounding space that is maintained for the purpose of passage along the trail route. The trail width may vary from 18 inches to 72 inches depending on its Recreational Opportunity Setting (ROS), ex. urban, rural/roaded natural, semi-primitive. All of the Ice Age Trail in Waupaca/ Portage Counties is located in a "rural/roaded natural" setting and will average 24 to 36 inches in width. Again, the location of the trailway and trail are dependent on landowners who are willing to be a part of the Ice Age Trail project. A number of alternative routes for the trail have been identified and are discussed under Sections X, XI, and XII.

#### CORRIDOR PLANNING PROCESS - SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

| <u>DATE</u>       | <u>EVENT</u>  |
|-------------------|---|
| April 30, 1993    | The Core Team met for the first time to: review the planning process and goals, discuss Waupaca/Portage Ice Age Trail's planning status, gain a greater understanding of the significant natural resources of the area, and identify and prioritize objectives for the "ideal" route.                       |
| June 28-29, 1993  | The Core Team evaluated and field reviewed alternative route proposals for the Ice Age Trail. A committee, "Small Group", was formed to refine alternative routes for the trail before the public review process is initiated.  |
| August-Sept. 1993 | The Small Group met three times to review and reconcile issues raised at the June Core Team meeting, and develop and field check alternative route proposals to recommend to the Core Team.   |
| November 15, 1993 | Small Group presented refined corridor and two alternatives trail routes to the Core Team with the intention of taking the proposal out for public review in the spring of 1994. Core Team approved plan and schedule.  |
| January 6, 1994   | Small Group met to strategize the timing for meeting with the town boards and to assign responsibilities.<br><br>Representatives of the NPS, WDNR, and IAPTF met with Waupaca County Park Commission to present to Alternatives Plan and to gain their input. The plan was well received by the Commission. |
| February 3, 1994  | Representatives of the NPS, WDNR, and IAPTF met with Portage Park Commission to present the Alternatives Plan and to gain their input. The plan was well received by the Commission.  |

March 1,3,5,7  
14, 16, 21,  
28, 1994

Representatives from the NPS, WDNR, and IAPTF met with the towns of **Alban, Belmont, Lanark, Amherst, Dayton, Scandinavia, New Hope, Farmington, and Iola** to present the Ice Age Trail Alternatives Plan and ask the town boards for their input.

April 12, 1994

Small Group met to review input received at town board meetings and prepare for Open House Meetings.

May 1994

Open House Meetings invitations were mailed.

June 8, 12, 16, 1994

Three Open House Meetings were held to present the Ice Age Trail Alternatives plan, provide information and gain input from landowners, public officials and the interested public. The meetings were well attended.

April 5, 1995

Small Group met to evaluate all of the data collected on the alternative trail routes. One route was chosen from a combination of alternatives as the preferred.

July 26, 1995

Small Group met to review the draft environmental assessment and to create a tentative schedule for the final phase of the public review.